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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHN E. SUNUNU, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be led in prayer this morning by our guest Chaplain, Rev. Fredricka A. Steenstra of Christ Episcopal Church, Elizabeth City, NC.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Gracious God, accept our thanks and praise for all that You have done for us. We thank You for the splendor of creation, for the beauty of this world, and for the wonder of life. We thank You for the blessing of living in this Nation and for the freedoms we enjoy. We thank You for the men and women of the Senate, both the Senators and their staffs. We are grateful for the sacrifices they make in order to serve the people of this Nation faithfully and in accordance with Your will.

We thank You also, Lord, for setting the people of our Nation and our Senators at tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us. We thank You also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on You alone.

Bless our Senators this day and in all the days ahead, that they may enact such laws as shall please You, O God, and further the welfare of Your people. Give all who labor in this great institution a zeal for justice and the strength of forbearance that they may help the people of this Nation to use our liberty rightly, in accordance with Your gracious will. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JOHN E. SUNUNU led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 25, 2004.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN E. SUNUNU, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. SUNUNU thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The assistant majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning the Senate will conduct a period of morning business until the hour of 10:30, with the first half of that time under the control of the majority leader or his designee and the second half under the control of Senator DASCHLE or his designee.

Following morning business, the Senate will begin consideration of the Unborn Victims of Violence Act. That bill will be considered under a consent agreement which allows for two amendments to be offered. The debate is limited on the amendments and the underlying bill. Therefore, we will vote throughout the day and complete action today on the Unborn Victims bill.

Senator DEWINE will be here to manage the bill on this side of the aisle. I understand Senator FEINSTEIN may offer her substitute amendment first. There will be up to four hours of debate in relation to the Feinstein amendment.

Senators should expect the first vote to occur sometime just after the lunch hour. As always, we will notify all Senators when votes are about to occur.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S MISTREATMENT OF RICHARD CLARKE AND OTHERS

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I have a simple request for the President today: Please ask the people around you to stop the character attacks they are waging against Richard Clarke. Ask them to stop their attempts to conceal information and confuse facts. Ask them to stop the long effort that has made the 9/11 Commission's work more difficult than it should be.

Regardless of whether one agrees or disagrees with Mr. Clarke's facts, he set an eloquent example for all of us yesterday. He acknowledged to the families of the victims of September 11 that their Government had failed them. He accepted responsibility for September 11. He made himself accountable and he tried, in my view, to help us understand what happened in the months and years before September 11. I could not be more disappointed in the White House response. They have known for months what Mr. Clarke was going to say. Instead of dealing with it factually, they have launched a shrill attack to destroy Mr. Clarke's credibility.

I know something about those attacks.

On several occasions, I have been on the receiving end of the White House

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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